

**State of Connecticut  
Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities**



**Regular Commission Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, May 12, 2021  
2:00 pm  
Via Microsoft TEAMS**

**Commissioners Present**

Cherron Payne, Chair  
Joseph Suggs  
Andrew Norton  
Lisa Giliberto  
Edith Pestana  
Nicholas Kapoor  
Neeta Vatti

**Commissioners Absent**

Edward Mambruno, Secretary

**Staff Present**

Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director

Neva E. Vigezzi, AA Supervisor	Gary Madison, AA Reviewer
Michelle Dumas Keuler, HRO Attorney	Shawn Burns, Regional Manager
Jamie Rubin, Regional Manager	Darcy Strand, Legislative Analyst
Kristen Daniels, Executive Secretary	Monica H. Richardson, Executive Secretary
Emily Melendez, Asst Attorney General	

**I. Chairperson:** Chair Payne, Presiding

The meeting convened at 2:00 p.m.

**II. Secretary:** Commissioner Andrew Norton, Acting Secretary

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto to approve of the minutes of the March 10, 2021 regular commission meeting. Commissioner Vatti seconded it; The vote: Yes (5) No (0), and Abstentions (1). Commissioner Pestana abstained. The motion carried.

**III. Affirmative Action Recommendations – Vote Required**

Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp presented the following plans:

Staff Recommendations: **Approval**

1. Department of Correction

Representing the agency were Commissioner Angel Quiros, Deputy Commissioner William Mulligan, and Deputy Commissioner Sharonda Carlos, Nick Rodriguez, District

Administrator, Eulalia Garcia, District Administrator, Holly Darin, EEO Director, Jeffrey Miller, Director of HR and Debbie Sass, Staffing Unit Supervisor.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency did not meet all or substantially meet all its hiring goals at 56%. The promotion goals were met at 73% and the program goals were met 100% (1 out of 1).

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2019/2020 showed 82.5% achievement for the SBE and 31.20% achievement for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019 Approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Suggs to accept the staff recommendation to **approve** the plan of the Department of Correction and retain annual filing status. The vote: Yes (6), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

## 2. Department of Developmental Services

Representing the agency were Commissioner Jordan Scheff, Renee LaBarge Khalid Ellis and Jennifer L Borenski.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency did not meet all or substantially meet all its hiring goals at 41%. The promotion goals were met at 43% and the program goals were not established for this filing period.

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2019/2020 showed 349% achievement for the SBE and 342% achievement for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2015, 2016, Approved, 2017, 2018, Conditionally Approved, and 2019 Approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Norton and seconded by Commissioner Giliberto to accept the staff recommendation to **approve** the plan of the Department of Developmental Services and retain annual filing status. The vote: Yes (6), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

## 3. Department of Social Services

Representing the agency were Deputy Commissioner Kathleen Brennan, Astread Ferron-Poole, EEO and Diversity Administrator and Kailie Gulino.

The plan was recommended for **Approval**:

The agency did not meet all or substantially meet all its hiring goals at 36%. The promotion goals were met at 60% and the program goals were not met, 0% (0 out of 2).

The Contract Compliance Set-Aside Program for FY 2019/2020 showed 196.5% achievement for the SBE and 326.6% achievement for the MBE.

The filing history is as follows: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020 Approved.

A motion was made by Commissioner Giliberto and seconded by Commissioner Kapoor to accept the staff recommendation to **approve** the plan of the Department of Social Services and retain annual filing status. The vote: Yes (6), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

#### **IV. Division Reports**

1. Executive Director Report:

- Executive Director was on vacation; submitted a detailed production report.

2. Outreach Report: by Cheryl Sharp, Deputy Director  
*See detailed report as highlighted by Deputy Director Sharp.*

- Kid's Speak and Kid's Court Academy

3.. Legislative update: by Attorney Darcy Jones Strand

- updated Bill chart.
- Commissioner Kapoor reappointed as Commissioner.
- OPH references.

#### **V. Executive Session**

*(Requires a two-thirds vote of commissioners present and voting – staff and guests invited to attend must be noted)*

Commissioner Kapoor moved to go into Executive session at 3:14 pm. Commissioner Vatti seconded it. The vote was: Yes (6), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

Invited into Executive Session with the Commissioners were Deputy Director Sharp, Attorney Michelle Dumas Keuler and AAG Melendez.

Pending Litigation:

1. CHRO v. 256 Edwards Street, LLC and CHRO v. The Farnham Realty Group, LLC  
Presented by Attorney Michelle Dumas Keuler for Attorney Brian Festa
2. Wallace v. Sharp, et al.
3. Johnson v. Hughes, et al
4. Mica Notz v. CHRO

#### **Return from Executive Session**

Commissioner Kapoor moved to return from Executive session at 3:40 pm and Commissioner Giliberto seconded it. The vote was: Yes (5), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

\*\* Commissioner Vatti left during Executive Session approximately 3:16 pm

#### **VI. Vote on Executive session items:**

CHRO v. 256 Edwards Street, LLC and CHRO v. The Farnham Realty Group, LLC

Commissioner Kapoor moved that two Commission initiated complaints be filed against 256 Edwards Street, LLC and The Farnham Realty Group, LLC. Commissioner Suggs seconded it. The vote was: Yes (5), No (0) and Abstentions (0). The motion carried.

**VII. Old Business**

Deputy Director Cheryl Sharp gave an update regarding OPH. Funding is being closely monitored; funds are available for Chief referee and referee. We are following up with the governor's office, OPM and DAS for further action.

**VIII. Adjournment**

A motion was made by Commissioner Kapoor to adjourn the meeting; Commissioner Pestana seconded it. The vote was: Yes (5), No (0), and Abstentions (0). The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 4:05 p.m.